

## Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, UNSC, UN, VN, US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH VIETNAM'S PERMANENT OBSERVER TO UN

AMB DINH BA THI ON VIETNAM'S UN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION,

AUG 31, 1976

1. ON AUG 31, AMB SHERER TELEPHONED VIETNAM'S AMB DINH BA THI FOR A MEETING. DINH AGREED TO MEET SHERER THAT DAY IN THE INDONESIAN LOUNGE OF THE UN AT 4:00 PM. MEETING LASTED OVER AN HOUR. VIETNAMESE PRESS OFFICER PHAM NGAC TRANSLATED FROM ENGLISH INTO VIETNAMESE AND VICE VERSA.

2. SHERER REFERRED TO VIETNAM'S APPLICATION FOR UN MEMBERSHIP. HE TURNED TO THE PORTION OF THE UN CHARTER CALLING FOR "INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN SOLVING INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS OF... HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER, AND IN PROMOTING AND ENCOURAGING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS..." HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE PORTION OF THE CHARTER STATING THAT MEMBERSHIP IN THE UN IS OPEN TO ALL PEACE-LOVING STATES ACCEPTING THE OBLIGATIONS CONTAINED IN THE CHARTER AND WHICH IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION HAVE DEMONSTRATED AN ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO CARRY OUT THESE OBLIGATIONS. SHERER STRESSED THAT "WILLINGNESS" WAS THE KEY WORD HERE.

3. SHERER CONTINUED THAT, FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD, VIETNAM'S AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT HEEDED OUR REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION REGARDING AMERICANS MISSING IN VIETNAM. HE SAID THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SAW THIS AS OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THE REQUIRE-

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MENTS OF THE CHARTER AND UTTERLY INHUMANE. SHERER EMPHASIZED

THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF SOME PROGRESS WITH REGARD TO THE MISSING PERSONS, WE WOULD BE FORCED TO VOTE AGAINST VIETNAM'S APPLICATION FOR UN MEMBERSHIP.

4. DINH REPLIED THAT HE COMPLETELY DISAGREED WITH SHERER'S THESIS, BECAUSE IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS SEEKING A "PRETEXT" TO BLOCK VIETNAM'S ADMISSION. DINH SAID THAT VIETNAM HAD MADE CLEAR IN ITS APPLICATION THAT IT WAS READY AND ABLE TO MEET THE OBLIGATIONS OF UN MEMBERSHIP. DINH CONTINUED THAT LAST YEAR THE U.S. HAD LINKED THE VIETNAMESE AND KOREAN APPLICATIONS SO AS TO BLOCK ADMISSION OF THE VIETNAMS. DINH STRESSED THAT VIETNAM'S APPLICATION HAD BEEN FIRMLY SUPPORTED AT COLOMBO AS WELL AS BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE UN. IF THE UNITED STATES BLOCKED VIETNAM'S APPLICATION, IT WOULD DO SO IN ISOLATION.

5. DINH CONTINUED THAT VIETNAM'S PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS BEEN "HUMANITARIAN" TOWARD AMERICANS. DINH REFERRED TO THIS SUMMER'S REPATRIATIONS FROM SAIGON. HE SAID THAT AS FOR THE MIA'S, HANOI HAD SUPPLIED ALL THE INFORMATION IT HAD. IT WAS NOT EASY TO GET THE DETAILS. MANY HAD DIED IN REMOTE AREAS, FALLEN IN THE SEA, ETC. DINH SAID THAT A COMMITTEE HAD BEEN SET UP IN VIETNAM TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON THE MIA'S. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF VIETNAM HAVE GIVEN DUE REGARD TO THE ANXIETY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. HE STRESSED THAT THERE WERE MANY VIETNAMESE INCLUDING HIS OWN BROTHER WHO ALSO WERE MISSING IN ACTION. DINH SAID THAT THERE MUST BE U.S.-VIETNAMESE COOPERATION IN THE TASK OF DETERMINING THE FATE OF THOSE MISSING. DINH CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT THE U.S. WAS NOT CHANGING ITS POSITION TOWARD VIETNAM.

6. SHERER REFERRED TO DINH'S USE OF THE WORD "PRETEXT" IN CONNECTION WITH THE U.S. POSITION ON VIETNAM'S MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION. SHERER REEMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE SUBJECT OF MIA'S HAD FOR AMERICANS. THE U.S. PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR A SIGN THAT VIETNAM INTENDED TO BE FORTHCOMING ON THE MIA'S. SHERER SAID THAT, IF THE COMMITTEE IN VIETNAM HAD WORKED HARD ON THE MIA QUESTION, THERE OUGHT TO BE SOMETHING TO REPORT.

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7. DINH SAID THAT VIETNAM HAD SHOWN ITS GOODWILL ON MIA'S THROUGH THE RETURN OF THE BODIES OF THE TWO MARINES WHO DIED AT THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON AS WELL AS THE REMAINS OF OTHER AMERICANS. HE SAID THAT THE MIA QUESTION WAS A BILATERAL ONE NOT TO BE LINKED TO UN ADMISSION.

8. SHERER, WHO HAD EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR VIETNAM'S

ACTION IN PERMITTING THE AMERICANS RETURN THIS SUMMER, UNDERLINED THAT WE WERE AWAITING INFORMATION ON MIA'S WHICH WE HAD REQUESTED MANY TIMES. DINH REPEATED THAT VIETNAM HAD ALREADY SHOWN ITS GOOD WILL REGARDING MIA'S. HE SAID THAT VIETNAM HAD GIVEN US ALL THE INFORMATION IT HAD ON MIA'S. SHERER CALLED FOR "A BIG SECOND EFFORT" TO PROVIDE US INFORMATION ON THE MIA'S. DINH CONTINUED TO ARGUE THAT THAT INFORMATION ON THE MIA'S WAS HARD TO COME BY AND TOOK TIME TO ACQUIRE. SHERER REPEATED HIS CALL FOR "A BIG SECOND EFFORT".

9. DINH SAID HE WOULD REPORT THE CONVERSATION TO HIS GOVERNMENT. HE DID NOT OFFER HOPE THAT FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE MIA'S WOULD SOON BE FORTHCOMING. SHERER DENIED DINH'S ALLEGATIONS THAT THE U.S. WAS DELIVERING AN "ULTIMATUM", BUT UNDERLINED RATHER THAT IT WAS STRESSING A HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM WHICH NEEDED MOST EXPEDITIOUS ATTENTION. SHERER AND DINH AGREED TO GIVE THEIR MEETING NO PUBLICITY. SCRANTON

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